

# THE NEW WESTMINSTER HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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June 2007

## **CLUB MEETING CALENDAR:**

**JUNE MEETING:** Tonight: Tues, June 12th, 7:45. Our **JUNE IN-CLUB SHOW** and a **GARDENING QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION** with a panel of knowledgeable NWHS members. We hope that you have, with the show schedule in hand, collected your entries from the garden. It is going to be interesting to see what the creative ones in the club have devised for entries in "floral art". During tea, you all will be casting votes for those entries you consider best in the overall classes of "cut materials" and "floral art". Good luck to you all. Regarding the Q & A, please hand in your questions before the meeting so the panel can get semi-organized in its answers. Thanks to the few of you who emailed & phoned in questions. It would be great if we have a discourse which includes non-panel members as well. That's what it is all about—sharing our knowledge. During the business section of the meeting, we will have two **MONEY VOTES** resulting from the fantastic success of our plant sale. See article elsewhere in the newsletter regarding this.

**JULY MEETING:** Tues, July 10th, 7:45: Jim Lowden of the Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation on "STANLEY PARK: THE DESTRUCTION & RECONSTRUCTION".

**AUGUST MEETING:** Teri Cantin, of Sharp & Diamond Landscape Architecture and Planning, on "GREEN ROOFS"

**SEPTEMBER MEETING:** Patricia Fleming, of Delta Recycling Earthwise Garden, on "XERISCAPING"

**CLUB OUTINGS:** *Carole Forsythe (604-515-1927; [carole.forsythe@shaw.ca](mailto:carole.forsythe@shaw.ca)) is the person in charge of outings. Unless stated for a specific outing, Carole is the person to contact if you have questions, want to get your name off or on a list, or want to offer suggestions.*

**NWHS Sketching Group, kick-off for 2007** Sat., June 16th, 1 to 3pm at Audrey's, 117 Seventh Ave. Once again we have lined up a top-notch instructor to kick-off the sketching season. This year we are delighted that Peri-laine Nilan (You may recognize her work. She is one of the illustrators for the New West Heritage Home Tour guide.) will be introducing us to some different techniques—she will demonstrate felt tip pen wash, basic coloured pencil layering, basic crosshatching pen work. As you may know, "the yard" could be cool even on the warmest day so dress in layers but bring sun hat, sun screen and sun glasses just in case. If you have a folding chair, bring it along as well.

### Art supply list:

- drawing pencil (B or softer), sharpener and eraser
- inexpensive felt tip fineliner plus black water-soluble fineliner (not a Sharpie)
- sketchbook or drawing paper with masking tape (or clips) and drawing board

Sign-up at the head table tonight or contact Audrey (not Carole) if your plans change. [sgbarnes@telus.net](mailto:sgbarnes@telus.net) or 604-526-8284 before 8pm. A Rain or Shine event!

## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER:** by Audrey

Ah, what a pleasant way to start the post-plant sale part of the NWHS year—a lot of sleep and 5 weeks to do it. Lots of exciting things coming up. In just over a month, we will be enjoying our Garden Tour (your garden???) & Picnic—a day long social! Sketching group starting soon—a social of a different sort. An enticing invitation to Southlands Nursery. It is so nice to have time to do these things. Oh yeah, thanks for reminding me—gotta get working on painting the house.

## **CLUB OUTINGS CONT.**

**Southlands Nursery Shopping Trip:** *The date and time has changed! However a 25% discount is worth it!* Sunday, June 24th, 9am at Southlands. Take a private tour of Southlands Nursery with Thomas Hobbs, the nursery's owner, florist, author and TV personality. Get your copy of Shocking Beauty or the Jewel Box Garden autographed. Best of all, he's giving tour participants who are also club members a 25% discount. Bring your membership card to set you apart from the hoi polloi. Tour starts with coffee at 9am. Sign-up sheet and map available tonight. We will be carpooling (leave space for plants!) so if you can give rides (or need a ride) please note that on the sheet. Call Carole if you change your plans.

## **NWHS Annual Garden Tour and Pot-Luck Picnic:**

Sat. July 14th. Each year members open their gardens to others to view. At the end of the tour, we have a picnic. Tour will probably start at 1 or 1:30 depending on the location and number of gardens. The picnic (again at Ellen & Nes Berg's—thank you, guys) at about 4 or 4:30. Unlike most garden tours, where each garden would be open for the entire afternoon, on our tour the gardens are open in sequence following a set itinerary. This enables members who are opening their gardens to visit the others. For the tour itself, members are invited to bring along adult guests. Out of respect for the gardens, we ask that no small children come along. There is no sign-up sheet for the tour itself. Kids are welcome at the picnic but be aware that Ellen has a large dog. There is a sign-up sheet for the picnic on which you indicate the number in your party and what you plan to donate to the feast. It is at the head table tonight and next month. At non-meeting times it is fastened to Audrey's fridge so phone her to be added or deleted. We have just started getting serious about lining up the gardens. Many feelers are out but only a few confirmed. If you would like to add yours there is still loads of opportunity—just talk to Audrey. At the moment, it looks like this year's tour will start in Burnaby and end near 314 West Durham (the picnic site)

**IN YOUR VEGE PATCH:** by the Urban Gardener, also known as Roy Pegler (604-520-6467), He would love talk “grow’n veges” with you.

This month, it is time to get the fall & winter producing crops started. For example, plant your Brussel sprouts, broccoli, carrot, Swiss chard and spinach seeds.

I think it is right time to repeat the tips on growing vegetables that I wrote a year ago. Looking after your tomato plants this month is essential if you want a good crop. Hopefully the plants are getting at least six hours of sunshine daily. Make sure a good handful of lime, preferably dolopril (quicker acting than dolomite) to save blossom end rot and a weekly dose of fish fertilizer until they are well established in the ground or container. It stimulates growth. Then limit nitrogen by using 4-10-10. Another good idea is to add a spoonful of sugar to the water when the fruits begin to show colour. The tomatoes will be sweeter & juicier. But go easy and keep watering well once a week. My final warning is do NOT let the water touch the leaves. I like to restrict the height to no more than six feet. All the growth then will revert to fruit on the vines which will give you better quantity and quality tomatoes.

This is a good time to sow nice, crisp lettuce which are easy to grow in most soils. Don't let the soil get too dry, especially if the weather is hot. Fertilize with fish fertilizer (liquid). It acts quickly. Or use 15-10-10. You can add a teaspoon of epsom salts to each plant to green up the leaves.

**GardenWorks Appreciation Day:** Thurs June 21st

## **NOT A ORGANIZED CLUB OUTING BUT ONE YOU WILL WANT TO ATTEND:**

### **Vancouver Rose Society Rose Show & Craft Sale:**

Sun, June 24. VanDusen Floral Hall. As the show benches are grouped by colour, class and fragrance this is a great opportunity to decide on the Rose that you just must have. Get insight how the judging is done and glean some great ideas for arrangements. Cast your vote for Best Rose and Best Photo in the Show. Rose “How to” Workshops. Info, Brenda at [brendaviney@telus.net](mailto:brendaviney@telus.net) or 604-936-1514. Admission \$4 (children under 12 free)

**Burnaby's Beautiful Garden Tour:** Sun July 15th, 10am to 4pm: Self guided, 7 unique gardens. Tickets \$10. Info: [www.brag.ca](http://www.brag.ca) or Faye at 604-434-5921.

### **Photography in the Garden—Summer, Early Mornings:**

Two days, Sat, July 21 & Sun, July 29, 8-10am on both days. VanDusen Gardens. Emphasis will be on the creative over the technical. Sat will include classroom instruction and hands-on photography; Sun will be more photography time and a review and discussion of your work. You should have a camera with manual settings and know how they work. Bring a tripod. Only for VanDusen members at \$50. info: 604-257-8666

**Sketches in the Garden:** Sun Aug 19th, 10am to 3pm. VanDusen. Explore line drawing, contour drawing, drawing “blind”, shading and tonal value as well as proportion and perspective. Instructor: Georgia Youngs. Members \$50; non-members \$55. info: 604-257-8666

## **IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF LAST MONTH'S PRESENTATION.**

**Debra Halbig has taken over as the reporter for this column.** For *Margaret Nakahara's “How to Show” presentation*, Debra did an absolutely fantastic notes on Margaret's advice. We are holding it until next May's newsletter when it will be of more use to you. Debra also did an abbreviated version which was sent to those of you who receive meeting notification by email. It is repeated here.

### **HINTS ON HOW TO SHOW:**

**1. Read the Show Schedule carefully!** Under each category there are guidelines as to what makes a complete entry. These must be followed or the entry will not be judged and will be marked NAS (Not According to Schedule). e.g pansies must have 3 blooms per exhibit—2 or 4 blooms would result in NAS.

**2. Choose entries in peak condition:** Tour your garden, show schedule in hand, and look to see which blooms, fruits and vegetables are at their best. Your choices should look crisp and sharp (not faded or wilted) with healthy foliage (if applicable) and straight stems. An entry in excellent condition will triumph over a larger exhibit that shows faults or damage (such as uneven colour, misshapen form or evidence of insects).

**3. Uniformity is Key.** The word “uniform” was used more than any other during Margaret's talk. Items are uniform if they are the same. This can mean different things in different categories, but is always an important judging requirement. If a category calls for more than one item per entry, they should be as equal to each other as possible. E.g. An entry of 6 strawberries that are identical to each other but only medium sized would score higher than an entry that included 3 large strawberries plus 3 others that did not match them. Uniformity can count in the appearance of a single item also: Is the colour the same through-out? Are all the petals similar to each other? Do they curl evenly?

**4. Presentation Counts:** Although the container itself is not being judged, how your entry is displayed can affect how it compares to another. Try to choose a plate or vase that is in proportion to your entry (not too big or too small) and not so fancy that it distracts from the plant. Take the time to arrange your produce on the plate in a pleasing way. Make sure to put the best side of your produce at the front! Use materials inside your vase to assist your blooms to stand at their straightest and put their best face forward. You usually want all stems at equal length, but judges fan also appreciate not having to move their heads around to check all the blooms.

**5. Keeping entries fresh once they are picked/cut.** Stems should always be cut on an angle to allow maximum access of water to the stem. Blooms should be placed immediately in a bucket of warm (not cold!) water until ready to be arranged. Diluted vinegar, lemon juice or alcohol can be used either in the water, or briefly applied to a cut stem, to kill bacteria. Use sparingly as too much can cause damage or alter colour. Keep the cut ends of produce (such as leafy vegetables) in water, or wrapped in wet newspaper—until the last moment of arranging before judging.

## **THE JOY OF SUCCULENTS** by David Tam-

**blin.** (David submitted this article for the May newsletter but we did not have space because of the inclusion of the show schedule. It was hard to miss the increasing popularity of these plants at the recent Garden Show.)

At the moment of writing, it is hard to believe in climate change. It is another cool, soggy, grey day. Is the snow pack slowly melting or still growing? Where will all that water go? But when that long, hot summer gets here, the reservoirs will dry up, the GVRD will impose water restrictions and the lost opportunities to xeriscape will spring to mind.

An obvious choice to carefree dry gardening is succulents. Eventually all plants need water but this group can live on their internal storage and thrive during a drought. Grown in a pot they will endure all kinds of vicissitudes and still put on a good face.

While many succulents are worth growing for their flowers, they offer much more. Not only do they have contrasting foliage (through greens, blue, black, red and yellow), they have architectural form in spades.

Although they produce seeds, many succulents rank as the easiest plants to reproduce vegetatively. Break off a side shoot or even a single leaf and it will root and form a new plant. All it takes is a little soil and patience.

Succulents comprise a numerous bunch, from sediums and sempervivums to euphorbias and lewisias, much too big a group to name them all. I will stick to a few.

Echeverias: in garden centres this seems to a “catch all” name, often including plants from other genera that certainly are not echeverias. Echeverias hail from Mexico and typically consist of a rosette of thick, pointed (obovate) leaves on a short stem. Typical is *E. elegans* (lots at our plant sale) in a pale jade with hints of red. Larger and more showy is *E. colorata* which turns bright red in full sun. There are near black, yellow, wine red ones—and hairy species too.

Species of *Graptopetalum* look much like echeverias and often mis-named. The common one is *G. paraguayense*. It originated in the same geographical area. Similar in stature are the *Pachyphytums*. Commonly seen is *Pachyphytum oviferum*, looking like a cluster of frost tinged pale green eggs. The *Echeveria* and *Pachyphytum* genera are sometimes crossed with pleasing results. These are called *Pachyveria*. The common one is *X Pachyveria glauca*.

Some members of genera *Haworthia* (from southern Africa) looking similar. With a pale green leaf, *H. cymbiformis* forms dense clumps, often planted with and mistaken for an echeveria. *Haworthias* typically have a variety of dramatic architectural forms. From the same semi-desert come *Gasteias*—sometimes in shades of green-black or with concentric white markings, these plants consist of overlapping leaves with little or no stem.

The family *Crassulaceae* offer several choice succulents. Two true *Crassulas* are common: *C. ovata* (Jade Plant) and *C. arborescens*, a thick silver-green plant with red-edged leaves. These include *Kalanchoes*, a florist favorite, while their first blooms are best, successive

## **SUCCULENTS CONT:**

blooms will follow with minimum care. An interesting *Kalanchoe* is “mother of millions” with leaves eagerly producing seedlings that just drop off—everywhere! Another *crassulaceae*, near black *Aeonium arboretum* ‘Zwartkop’, is a show stopper.

Perhaps the king of architectural plants is *Agave*, huge and hard to ignore, especially the spiny leaf tips.

As many other local gardeners have done, we have almost eliminated our chafer-ridden lawn from our property. Instead I have planted various ground covers (woolly thyme, sedums, golden oregano, *Ajuga*, *acaena*, etc). In spring, I plant out specimen succulents among them. (Of course, they will have to be lifted before heavy frosts.) My other succulents are grown in pots, the most pleasing as mixed plantings. But many succulents blend well in mixed borders or stand out in rockeries.

If you want to learn more about succulents, the Desert Plant Society has an annual show & sale at VanDusen on June 16th and 17th. It is a good opportunity to learn or buy. Free admission. To buy full grown plants or containers of succulents, consider Western Independent Greenhouses (WIGs) just off Marine Drive, Burnaby.

**MONEY VOTES:** Due to the fantastic success of our plant sale (many thanks to the huge multitude of members who helped), the executive proposes the following two money motions be voted on tonight.

### **BC COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUB'S SCHOLARSHIP**

**TRUST FUND:** The interest from the fund is annually donated to deserving students in horticultural studies throughout BC. The money we donate goes to the “principle” of the fund i.e. our money itself is not donated to the students but the interest on the money is.

**Motion:** “*NWHS donate \$2000 to the BC Council of Garden Club's Scholarship Trust Fund*”. This is the same amount that we donated in 2005 & 2006.

**NWHS DONATION COMMITTEE BUDGET:** Last year we formed a Donation Committee comprised of both executive and non-executive members. The purpose of the committee is to collect nominations from the NWHS membership for worthy local horticultural programs and initiatives, to evaluate these nominations and decide who should receive all or part of the money available. Their proposal is put to the executive who has the final vote. Using this procedure, with the committee and executive representing the general membership, there is no final vote put to club members on any of the nominated recipients. At the moment, the nomination form is being revised. Think of who you would like to nominate. The nomination form will be available at July general meeting and must be submitted by Sept 30th. The successful applicants will be announced at the November General meeting. If you would like to be on the committee, contact Carole Forsythe, the committee chairperson, 604-515-1927.

**Motion:** “*NWHS allocates \$2000 as the Donations Committee Budget for 2007*”. Last year the budget was \$1000 which ended up being split into four \$250 donations. With our fantastic plant sale results, we think \$2000 more appropriate for 2007.

## **VANCOUVER SUN GARDEN SHOW:**

Well, if you made it to the show, you are one of the lucky ones. If you managed to attend Thurs to Fri, you are to be counted among the blessed. Sadly, for the show and Fireworks Marketing, the show producers, a monsoon hit again. Most unfortunate! Lets keep our fingers crossed that it returns in 2008. The garden show has always been a place to discover new things and rediscover old friends—this year was no exception. From the clubs' point of view, chatting with the vendors opens all sorts of possibilities of great exciting ideas. But we really don't need to wait for a club visit to indulge because it is becoming the norm for the different nurseries to have websites and enticing electronic newsletters. Here are a few that were at the show—all have electronic newsletters to ensure you get some interesting email. Heritage Perennials: [www.perennials.com](http://www.perennials.com)

The Natural Gardener: [www.thenatural-gardener.com](http://www.thenatural-gardener.com)

Phoenix Perennials: [www.phoenixperennials.com](http://www.phoenixperennials.com)

GardenWorks: [www.gardenworks.ca](http://www.gardenworks.ca)

Lee Valley Tools: [www.leevalley.com](http://www.leevalley.com)

Devan Greenhouses: [www.devangreenhouses.ca](http://www.devangreenhouses.ca)

**The saga of the container:** It was a bit of a surprise to discover, upon reading the entry form in detail, groups could not enter—individuals only! Well, since only Carole and Audrey met to discuss the container and Audrey took the initiative (read “excuse”) to buy a bunch of plants, it was decided that the entry would be under the name of Audrey Barnes. Which meant Audrey could buy plants without a guilty conscience. Using miss-tinted house paint, a black container was converted to a subtle purple. With paint sample in hand Audrey and side-kicks, Carole & Patti, searched out even more coordinating plants. Then finally the day came when Audrey and Carole planted the container—mainly Audrey, with Carole aghast at how Audrey treated the plants and how she squished them into the container (43 in total). The entry was faxed. Container entered under “Outstanding use of Foliage” with a very creative connection to the Show Theme, Windows on the World: *“What makes the world exciting? How people of different races & cultures choose to integrate or to stay isolated and how they do it. Similar to how the plants’ form and colour meld and contrast. In this way, my container could be considered a “window on the world”.*” The thing was carefully transported, mindful not to scrape the paint. Unwanted weigelia blooms were removed even though it looked better with them (foliage container=only leaves). Audrey & Steve arrive first in line on Thurs morning to find the whole container was set inside a beige ceramic pot!!!! Plants look boring with the color. Blood pressure goes back to normal and with the OK from a Fireworks chap, the container was lifted out—looked a lot better even though the pot is really scraped. After checking the container area umpteen times throughout the day—finally—there's a green sign on the container “WINNER: MOST COLORFUL CONTAINER”. High Fives!! We missed out on the hard cash given to the two overall winners, but that's OK. Since there are a few shrubs in the creation, it will be dismantled so that Audrey can now landscape her garden. But this will not be done until after the weekend so that the sketching group can draw it, if so desired. Feel free to drop by and check it out. It's in the side back yard by the paved lower patio.

## **THIS ‘N’ THAT:**

■Count them in! Three new members joined in May! We welcome PENNY DOMBOWSKY, DENISE NORTH and CHERYL SNIDER.

■Hopefully you picked up a copy of your NEW ROSTER tonight. Please check it carefully regarding your personal information. Any discrepancies? Talk with Mary at the treasurer's table. Not on it and you should be? Talk with Mary but don't blame her! It is probably Audrey's fault for trying to do too much multi-tasking. Note that the executive have been pulled from the body of the roster and are listed first. This is to simplify your contact with them.

■PHOTO CONTEST & CONTAINER CONTEST rules are on the back of the roster. Now, when things are probably at their peak in gardens, is the time to get out there and really look and take some good pictures. Hint: if you are using a digital camera, get those “best” shots developed now—don't loose them in the multitude of files on your computer. It is so much easier to pick your best three in each category when you have hard copies to compare. Take photos of your containers (or ask Audrey to). So often we forget and then the things are past their prime and the opportunity is lost.

■Do you have PLANTS YOU PLAN TO DIVIDE for the sale next year? Take a picture of the blooms (and overall plant shape) now! If you like, give Audrey a call and she will arrange to zip over with her camera. Then she can easily get them developed for the club.

■Do you frequent the New Westminster Public Library? Next time, check the gallery wall on the main floor wheel chair ramp. Until the end of June, MONTANA KING, has a showing of art work and poetry. Very interesting!

■BUFF O'SHAUGHNESSY (also known as the lady who does the great job with the seed exchange) is absent tonight because her dog just came home from the maternity ward with seven gorgeous offspring. Buff is on 24 hour duty with the mom.

■SHELAGH PENTY is going tomatoes (oh, that says “growing tomatoes”!). She is delighted at the fantastic growth the plants but is hoping that someone has some regular size tomato cages they no longer want. She has seven plants thriving in pots. 604-524-1596. She also achieved recent fame by being mentioned twice in the latest edition of Garden's West. She scrawled a quick note of appreciation when she renewed and they put it both on the editorial page and in the letter section.

■Audrey still has the earring found at the plant sale.

■Want a club T-shirt? We have a limited supply of Med & Large (both colours) available at the treasurer's table. \$15.

■Amazingly, we still have some plastic plant saucers available—12, 14 & 18”. Back to the normal club member price of \$1 each—see Audrey if you would like to buy some. The supply is diminishing so act quickly.

## **E-MAIL NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS:**

Anna Camporese would just love to hear of any updates you have to your email address (or if you want to be added to the list!). Reach her at [Anna\\_Camporese@telus.net](mailto:Anna_Camporese@telus.net). Please preface your email subject with “nwhs”. Thanks